

KEELER - SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS - N. Y. 1831





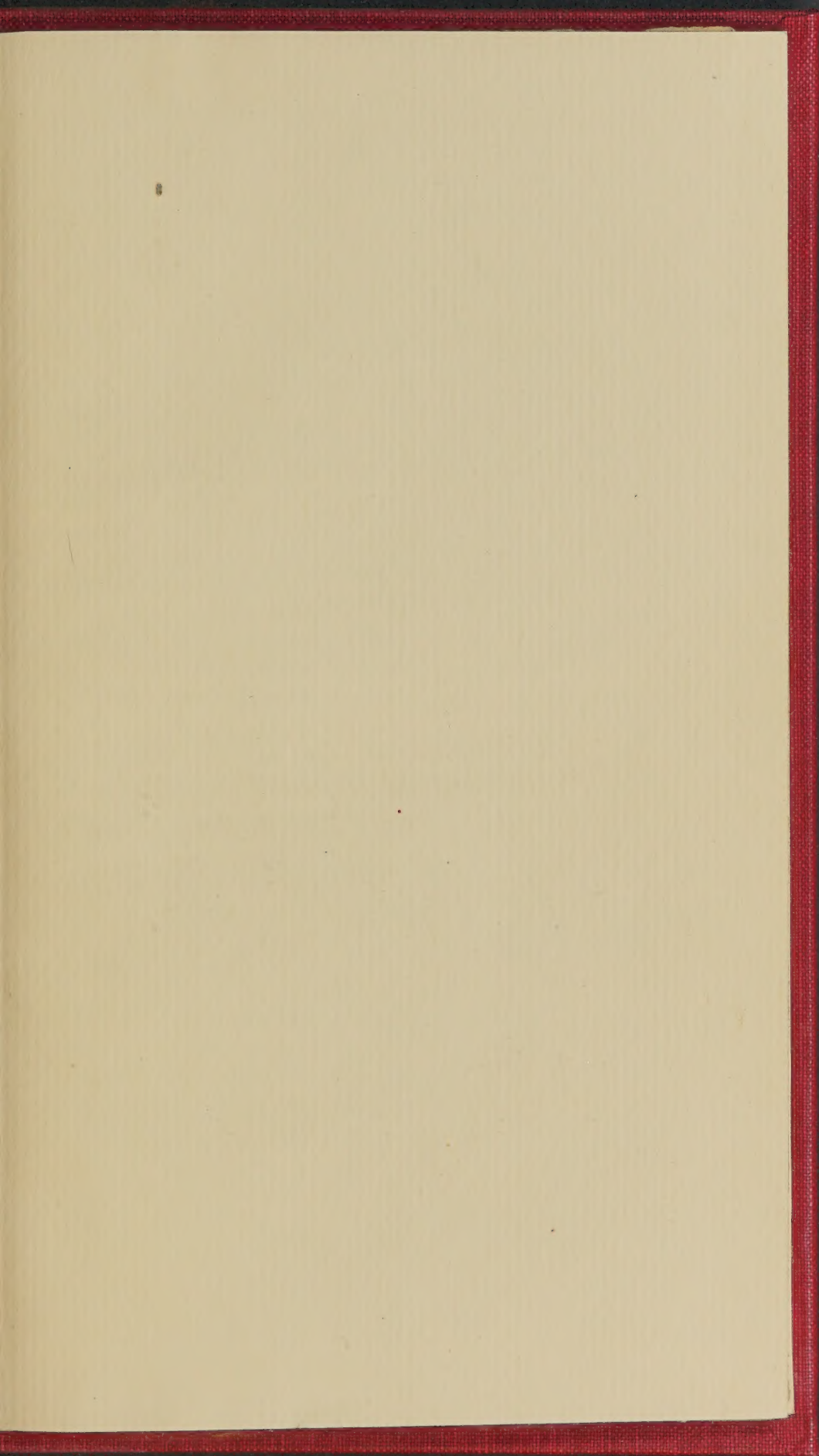


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THE
SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS,
WITH A
SHORT SKETCH OF CAPTAIN MORRELL'S VOYAGE
TO THE
NORTH AND SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN,
IN THE
SCHOONER ANTARCTIC;
BELONGING TO
MESSRS. BERGH, WESTERFIELD, CARNLEY, SKIDDY, LIVINGSTON,
AND IVERS.
OF
NEW-YORK.

BY JOHN KEELER,
ONE OF THE CREW.

To which is added, a brief Sketch of the sufferings of LEONARD
SHAW, while in Captivity.

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THE

SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS.

The two South Sea Islanders, who were brought to this country by Captain Morrell, in the schooner *Antarctic*, are really interesting objects of curiosity. Judging from the portraits which voyagers have exhibited of the copper colored race in that part of the globe, an unfavorable opinion has generally been adopted of their form and faces. We find nothing agreeable in the dull, snub-nosed idolaters of the Sandwich groupe, or in the shrunk and misshaped cannibals of New Zeland. But in the pleasing and intelligent countenances of SUNDAY and MONDAY—by which names Capt. Morrell's proteges are called—there are lineaments well worthy of contemplation. Most of our readers have seen in the streets of our city, Chinesemen and women, with their long tails and silly looks, from the Celestial Empire ; and have occasionally met with Indians of the Osage, Menominee and Wyandott tribes, with their calumets, silver rings, and uncouth features, from the far west of our own republican land. But we assure them, that to these, in form and feature, the dark strangers from an unknown and distant region, of whom we have made mention, are infinitely superior.

There is something very savage and determined in the countenance of the younger. His eye is lively and brilliant ; his nose is finely shaped ; his forehead smooth and well proportioned ; his hair short and silky ;

and, in a word, nature has given every indication that she cast him in one of her most exquisite moulds.

The elder, who at home sways the sceptre of a Chief, is much better shaped for a warrior and a general. His hair is not like that of the negro—it is longer, softer, and finer. His forehead, and the back part of his head, are well shaped; as, also, are his feet and legs. His skin is softer and lighter than that of his companion. He is remarkably well formed, robust and active; is very intelligent, and differs materially from the black race of North and South Africa.

We have only to add, that they are perfectly docile, and behave with propriety. Nothing indecent or offensive appears in their persons or deportment. They now wear clothes similar to those of the colored men of this country, and appear to be very much gratified with being arrayed in this fashion. They still keep their war implements, such as bows and arrows, spears and war clubs, and their fishing geer; together with their ornaments, and former articles of dress of their own manufacture, for the examination of the public. It is understood that all their lines and habiliments are made of the bark of a tree, and their fish hooks are made of the mother of pearl and tortoise shell.

SKETCH OF
CAPTAIN MORRELL'S VOYAGE
TO THE
North & South Pacific Ocean.

The Antarctic sailed from New York in September, 1829, on a voyage to the South Seas, for the purpose of collecting a cargo of fur seal skins. In October following, she touched at the Cape de Verd Islands and obtained the salt necessary for the preservations of the skins expected to be taken.— From thence the Antarctic touched at Tristan de Cuna, at the Island of Desolation, at Lord Auckland's Groupe, at the Snares at Nights Island, and examined all the coast of New Zeland. But being disappointed in procuring a cargo of furs in the above route, Captain Morrell determined on altering his voyage, and accordingly shaped his course for Manilla. Whilst proceeding thither, he fell in with a groupe of Islands, which, not being on the chart or the epitome, he called Westerfield's Groupe, after Jacob Westerfield, of New York. These Islands are seven in number, are small, and nearly surrounded with an extensive coral reef, over

which the sea breaks with great violence at all seasons of the year. They are loaded with fruit trees and timber, and appear to be well inhabited. The shores contain pearl and tortoise shell, and beach-le-mar.

On the day following, Captain Morrell discovered land again, and found it to consist of another groupe of Islands, extending about one hundred miles N. and S., and about ninety miles E. and W. These being neither mentioned on any map or in any epitome, he called them Bergh's Groupe, after Edwin Bergh, of New York. These Islands are entirely surrounded with a coral reef with the exception of three narrow passages of about one hundred yards each. Here Captain Morrell had some intercourse with the natives, and found them to be very numerous. From seeing six or eight hundred canoes around the vessel at once, he supposes that this groupe contains about twenty-five thousand inhabitants; very stout, robust, active, straight-haired, copper-colored men. And from the war implements that he saw, he had every reason to think them to be good warriors. These Islands afford the pearl and tortoise shell, beach-le-mar, and many other valuables; and are loaded with timber and good fruit trees. There are about seventy-five Islands in this groupe, and within the reef, the anchorage is safe and easy of access. The natives appear to be controlled by a monarchical government.

On the 25th of the same month, Captain Morrell again saw land, which proved to be

a long, low Island, loaded with fruit and timber, with a long coral reef running off from the eastern side of the Island about ten miles. The natives appear to be quite numerous and well disposed. This Island is not in any chart, or in any epitome, Captain Morrell therefore gave it the name of Livingston's Island, in honor of C. L. Livingston, of New-York.

On the tenth of March, the Antarctic arrived at Manilla, and there fitted out for a voyage to the Fejee Islands, in search of a cargo of beach-le-mar, tortoise shell, &c.— In the prosecution of this voyage, Captain Morrell sailed from Manilla on the twelfth of April, 1830 ; and on the 6th of May following, he made another discovery of one small, low Island, well wooded and inhabited, and surrounded with a coral reef. This island Capt. Morrell gave the name of Ivers' Island, in honor of Beach Ivers, of New-York.

In a few days after this, he discovered a very extensive reef of coral, to which he gave the name of Wallace's Reef. This reef has from two to fifteen fathoms of water upon it, and is about thirty miles in circumference.

Captain Morrell continued his course towards the south and east, with great caution, keeping two men at the mast head day and night. From the fifth of May to the twenty-third, the Antarctic touched at many new islands, most of which were thickly inhabited, contain pearl and tortoise shell and beach-le-mar, and affording good anchor-

age around the shores within the coral reefs, with which they are all nearly surrounded.

One amongst the many islands that the Antarctic visited up to the present date, is Monteverdesant. This groupe is about twenty-five in number, all well inhabited, well provided with fruit and timber, and entirely surrounded with a coral reef. The Antarctic came close in with the islands about ten A. M., when about three hundred of the natives came alongside with every mark of friendship that it is possible for mankind to shew. It soon fell calm, and the natives continued alongside and on deck until near sundown, when they all started for the land, but when about half way there, made a full stop; and in a few minutes about three hundred warriors were observed coming from the shore. These soon joined their companions, divided their war implements, painted themselves red, ornamented their heads with cocoa nut leaves and red feathers, held a council of war, and in a few minutes all started for the schooner with great speed. As they drew near, their countenances exhibited a determination to conquer or perish in the attempt. It will be remembered, that the sun had just sunk beneath the western horizon when the formidable warriors—a race of men averaging from 275 to 320 pounds each, and not far from six hundred in number—made their attack upon the Antarctic. Captain Morrell had sufficient warning, and every man was at his quarters ready to meet the impending attack. As soon as they came within close

pistol shot, the Antarctic opened a brisk fire with her guns, swivels, and musketry, and the affrighted assailants retreated with great trepidation, though not without considerable loss. It being dark by this time, and having no wind, Captain Morrell was obliged to keep all hands to their quarters during the night. At daylight he took light a breeze and steered to the south and east.

On the twenty third of May, the schooner came in sight of six Islands ; all small, with a reef of coral rocks running from one to the other, through which there was here and there a small channel, about one hundred yards in width. These islands appeared very fruitful, and several large canoes were seen inside the reef. The boat was sent to the reef, and plenty of beach-le-mar, of excellent quality, being found there, the Captain determined to procure a cargo of that commodity at this place. After anchoring and making other necessary preparations, part of the crew were sent ashore on the twenty-sixth, for the purpose of clearing away the trees and bushes, and building a house, where the beach-le-mar, when taken, might be cured and rendered fit for exportation. The natives came off to the schooner in several large canoes, bringing coconuts and shells. They were negroes of large stature, and some of them appeared to possess considerable acuteness. No white man had ever been seen by them before ; and they imagined the crew of the Antarctic to be painted white, and endeavoured, by

rubbing, to bring their skin to the complexion of their own. They had no definite perceptions that the world contained any human beings but themselves. Their ideas were all confined to the little groupe of islands on which they lived. They had, however, some very slight and imperfect notions of another groupe at some distance from them, and from these they presumed the schooner now came. But this was the extent of their knowledge of the creation. They were entirely ignorant of the vast work of the Almighty, and dreamed not till now, that the footsteps of man were imprinted upon any other soil than that within the circumference of their own little isles. The mountains whose lofty summits are bathed in clouds or crowned with eternal frost and snow—the vallies that bud and bloom, and yield their increase to millions of the human species—the oceans and rivers, and lakes, that beautify and freshen the earth as they flow,—

“ Giving blossoms to nature and laurels to man,”
 were alike unknown, unheeded by them. All their ambition, their love, and their fame, was confined to the little spot from whence they sprung.

But unsophisticated as they appear, unused as they are to the corruptions of the world, treachery and deception dwell in their hearts. They seemed to be perfectly harmless and friendly, their principal chiefs visiting the vessel several times on the twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-seventh of May, always bringing with them some kinds of fruit to present to the Captain, and

he taking them all over the vessel, and giving them every thing that he thought would be pleasing or useful to them. He gave them articles of cutlery, trinkets, &c., to the value of about one hundred and fifty dollars; and in return for courtesies of this description they expressed much attachment to the Captain and crew of the schooner. On the 27th of May, Capt. Morrell was employed three or four hours in the heart of the Island, planting seeds of different kinds, particularly those that he thought would be most serviceable to the Islanders. During these ceremonies, Capt. Morrell was accompanied by two or three hundred chiefs and warriors, who expressed themselves highly gratified with the interest he manifested for their present and future welfare.

We abstain from noticing the surprise they exhibited on first beholding their visitors. The conduct of savages in similar circumstances, is probably nearly alike at all times, and there are but few who have not at some interval or other, dwelt with deep interest on the details of the first meeting between civilized and uncivilized men. We will only say, therefore, that they were profuse in their professions of friendship towards us, and their hostility was never dreamed of for a moment.

The same day we got the forge on shore and set the armorer at work. He had not been there long before the natives gathered around and stole the greater part of his tools. On being informed of this strange proceed-

ing, Capt. Morrell took six of his best seamen, armed with muskets, pistols and cutlasses, and marched to the village where the King lived, to remonstrate against the thieves, in hopes that he would, if possible, have the tools returned. This village was beautifully situated in the centre of a grove of majestic trees; and as Capt. Morrell and his devoted band emerged from the thicket into the opening, judge his astonishment at beholding directly in front of him about two hundred warriors. They were completely armed, with bows and arrows; their faces were painted red, and their heads fantastically ornamented with red feathers. On seeing all this parade, Captain Morrell well knew they were prepared for war, and immediately turned to speak to his men, when to his infinite surprise, he found that nearly an equal force of the warriors had closed in behind them. Thus he was surrounded by from three hundred and fifty to four hundred warriors, all ready to attack his small but dauntless band, and threatening them with instant annihilation, or, perchance, the lingering torments of a torturing death! But the self possession of Capt. Morrell sustained him in that trying hour; and without a moment's reflection he thus addressed his men—"My brave men, we are all gone! we are encompassed on all sides by a band of asages! Nothing but a desperate act will save us from the jaws of the furious cannibals which surround us! Preserve your courage, therefore, men, and observe with firmness and attention every order I

shall give." The Captain then immediately threw his musket upon the ground, drew one of his pistols with his right hand, and his cutlass with his left, and ordered two of his men to follow his example. Then giving the others the necessary orders, which were promptly obeyed, he surveyed the ring of warriors in search of the King. He soon discovered his majesty on the opposite side, and immediately presented his pistol to the royal breast, and with his two chosen followers, advanced towards his foe, keeping the position of the pistol unchanged. As soon as he came up with the King, he placed one of his men on each side of him, with their glittering cutlasses suspended over his head, and orders to sever it from his body the moment an arrow was discharged at himself. By so doing, the Captain thought that in the confusion which the King's death would create, we might possibly escape.—The men then braced themselves up to the horrid exigency of their situation, and gave every order implicit obedience. The cannibals beheld the danger of their King, and every bended bow instinctively dropped with its arrow to the ground! The moment Captain Morrell saw this fortunate effect of his hasty measures, and while confusion reigned in their ranks, he walked around the circle with his drawn cutlass, and compelled every one to lay down his war-club, or whatever implement of defence he might have, and then set his remaining four men to collect them into one heap. This being done, he took the King and six of the prin-

cipal chiefs on board the schooner and detained them until next morning. While on board, he presented them with every thing he thought would be either useful or pleasing to them, and feasted them with whatever appeared to suit their tastes. In the morning, after giving them a hearty breakfast, and many additional presents, he sat them ashore. They all appeared delighted with their visit, and exhausted their efforts in attempts to convince us of their gratitude; whether affected or sincere, is left for those to determine who shall follow the course of this little narrative. It is true, however, and melancholy as true, that it was only four hours after they were set on shore, that the horrid massacre of a part of the schooner's crew was perpetrated.

At mid-day a number of canoes put off from the neighboring Islands. The Captain being on board at the time, waiting for his dinner, and a little apprehensive of hostilities,—the natural conclusion from past events,—reinforced his men on shore to the number of twenty-one. All these were armed with muskets, cutlasses and boarding pikes. Arrangements were also made to take the remainder of the crew on shore immediately after dinner for the purpose of putting the roof on the house. The boat which brought the reinforcement, likewise contained a quantity of beads to be distributed amongst the natives as they should gather around the building. The officer commanding the men on shore was particularly cautioned to be on his guard; a caution, however, which he unfortunately dis-

regarded, for shortly after the natives made a general and successful attack upon him from the woods. Two of the crew, who were in the jolly boat, had just time to shove her off and escape; and when out of the reach of the arrows, which were showered upon them, they laid by and picked up three more who had saved themselves in the water. The whale boat, despatched by the Captain with ten armed men, on hearing the war-whoop of the natives, saved two more of their shipmates; but the remainder with the exception of the narrator hereof, were all inhumanly massacred!

The cause of this cruel and blood thirsty act, it is not easy to divine, for the natives never received the slightest offence from any one belonging to the vessel. Capt. Morrell and crew had ever been extremely cautious to use them, not only with kindness, but even with the most marked and delicate attentions. What horrid infatuation, then, could have directed their exertions to the murder of these innocent men?

The situation of the schooner at this moment was deplorable indeed. Fourteen of her crew were murdered and four wounded. Sixteen only remained, and they were overcome with the excessive heat of the climate, [thermometer at 107] and shocked at the sight of their shipmates murdered in cold blood before their eyes. And even in death their victims were not suffered to rest, for the savages, in barbarous triumph, stood over their bleeding corpses, piercing them through and through with their spears long

after the spirit had departed. The effect of these scenes, under such circumstances, was sufficient to shock the stoutest hearts; it cannot be wondered then that sickness should have followed the fatigue they had borne and the horrors upon which they had looked. Every one of the survivors was seized with a dreadful vomiting and the appearance of the vessel and crew under this new calamity beggars all description. We leave it, unattempted, to the imagination of the reader, and go on to state, that while laboring under these deplorable circumstances, the natives made preparations to attack the vessel. This, however, was prevented. Captain Morrell observing their determination, and being unable to make any resistance, took advantage of a light breeze, slipped his cable and put to sea.

The crew of the schooner being thus sadly diminished, and the remainder scarcely fit for duty, Capt. Morrell considered it impossible to prosecute the object of his voyage, and therefore determined to return to Manilla and obtain a reinforcement of men. He arrived there on the twenty-fifth June, shipped sixty-six men, and sailed again on the eighth of August. On the thirteenth of September, he once more reached the Island, where he had lost so many of his crew; and which, from that circumstances, he had called *Massacre Island*. But he had no sooner anchored than he was again attacked by the natives in their canoes. A brisk fire from the schooner, however, compelled them to retreat. The Captain then turned the big guns upon the town, the roar and effect of which

alarmed them very much—the eloquence of cannon was too sublime for their nerves, and immediately produced beneficial results. A small canoe came off from the shore, containing, to the inexpressible joy of all on board the schooner, one of their old crew, Leonard Shaw, who is the only survivor of those who fell into the hands of the savages at the time of the massacre. As Mr. Shaw has given his own statement at the end of this narrative, we pass over the interesting but horrid recital thereof, and direct the reader to his own unvarnished tale.

The Massacre Islands are covered with wood, a few foot paths only running through them. The huts are built in small clusters on the sea coast for the convenience of fishing, the natives subsisting entirely upon fish and fruits. But we are admonished from the space devoted to these Islands that it is time to bring our narrative to a close; we shall therefore confine ourselves to but one other encounter with the natives.

During the two months that the Antarctic lay at the Massacre Islands, Capt. Morrell had many smart engagements with the natives, in which self-preservation compelled him to destroy many of their villages and canoes. In order to protect the people at work on shore, he caused a kind of battery to be constructed. This battery was of peculiar construction. It was formed by placing rafters upon the boughs of two large trees, at an elevation of forty feet from the ground, nearly in the form of a square. Upon this platform four brass swivels were mounted, with a garrison of sixteen of the best men in the crew, armed with muskets, and furnished with provisions sufficient to sustain themselves a considerable time in case they should be besieged. Directly beneath, was the house erected for the operations of those at work upon objects connected with the voyage, a building perhaps one hundred and fifty feet in

length, and which the fort was intended to cover from the attacks of the savages. But this novel fortification was hardly completed, when the natives made a general attack upon it with about two hundred and fifty warriors by land, and three hundred in canoes upon the water. They came within a hundred yards and then discharged a shower of arrows, and kept up their fire, with desperation in their looks and revenge in every arm, until within twenty yards of the battery, when a brisk fire was opened upon them with the swivels and muskets, the former loaded with cannisters of musket balls and buck shot, and the latter well charged with buck shot. At the same moment the schooner opened her messengers of death upon the canoes. Their reception was so much warmer than they had anticipated, that they were not prepared for the shock, and gathering up their killed and wounded, they made a precipitate retreat. Two men only were wounded in this skirmish on our part.

We pass over the purchase of Massacre Island from its chief, his death, and many other details, from necessity, and proceed to the result of the voyage. No exertions of Captain Morrell could pacify the natives. They had taken offence without cause, and no efforts could appease them. They continued their acts of hostility with untiring perseverance, and neither chastisement nor measures of conciliation and kindness could alter their purpose. In this state of affairs, and the crew of the Antarctic being on short allowance of provisions, Capt. Morrell gave up all hope of obtaining a cargo from the coral reefs that bound these shores, and proceed to sea on the 3d day of November, 1830, and steering to the north and west.

In prosecuting his voyage new discoveries were still in his track. He fell in with two groupes of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, one of which he named Skiddy's Groupe, after Captain W.

Skiddy, of New-York ; and the other Carnley's Groupe, after Robert Carnley, of the same city; These islands contain the beach-le-mar, and tortoise and pearl shell, of the best quality. We also saw there, birds of Paradise, portable bird's nests, &c.

During this cruise, many other important discoveries were made, which must prove of immense importance to Capt. Morrell in his future voyages, and indeed to the world at large. After leaving the Massacre Islands, the Antarctic was attacked at four different islands by the natives in large fleets of canoes, armed with bows and arrows, slings, spears, &c. At the island where Sunday came from he encountered about five hundred ; and at that whence Monday was taken the still greater and almost incredible force of near two thousand warriors. The report of cannon from the schooner seemed to strike them with terror. From their actions they had never before witnessed the effects of gunpowder. In their alarm, as the thunder of the first volley echoed along the rocks and the shore, they deserted their canoes and sought safety in the water. Capt. Morrell, observing this, ceased firing, lowered his boats, went alongside their canoes, and took what implements he pleased, picked up one man from each groupe of islands, and then continued on his course towards Manilla, where he arrived on the fourteenth of December, 1830.

Sunday and Monday are extremely anxious to return to their country. It is Capt. Morrell's intention to take them home in the spring ; and in the mean time he is taking every possible means to attach them to him, and make their visit here a theme of grateful contemplation hereafter.

The love of one's own land is an innate principle of the human heart. No spot on earth is

so dear to civilized beings, as that where childhood has received its earliest impressions—where youth's gay hours were but a succession of joys. There the simplest objects are altars of devotion, and every accent breathed is from lips we adore. It is there, where the pure hours of infancy were beguiled—where boyhood sported in innocent mirth—where youth dreamed its earliest and holiest creations of love. If then, civilized man turns his eye with such fondness to his home, with all the world before him where to choose, with what unspeakable and thrilling emotions will these South Sea Islanders gaze upon their native Isles when they return in the spring to their distant shores!

A BRIEF SKETCH
OF THE
Sufferings of Leonard Shaw,
ON MASSACRE ISLAND.

On the 28th of May, 1830, while myself and nineteen others were employed on what Captain Morrell has designated the *Massacre Island*, the natives made a determined and too successful attack upon our little band. Seven of the number, as the preceding narrative states, made their escape to the vessel, and the remaining thirteen met with instant destruction.

Our little party of six, was on the bank, or north side of the island, at work, totally defenceless and unprotected, except by the tools in our hands ; our arms, &c. having been left at the house a quarter of a mile distant. Hearing the savage yell of the natives, which still rings in my ears, and can never be forgotten, we took to the beach, and ran for life. Here we were immediately surrounded by the negroes. Three of my comrades, running the gauntlet, plunged into the water, and the rest of us, not being swimmers, fled again upon the beach. The natives being close in pursuit, my two remaining companions were soon overtaken and killed upon the spot, with ponderous blows with the war club. I alone outstripped their speed, and changing my course, made directly for the woods. Here

slackening my pace for breath, the blood hounds scented their prey, and soon came upon me. Two who were in advance of their party commenced discharging their arrows at me, and I had now no hope of life remaining. However chivalric might have been the effect of my efforts—however dearly I might have sold my life, in a combat for its preservation against the fearful odds of an enraged nation in arms—I could have no hope of final success. Death, in its most horrid forms was all about me. Still I clung to life, hopeless as the case appeared ; and necessity suggested a stratagem to preserve it. Notwithstanding the haste in which I had fled, I had kept the axewith which I had been at work. I sheltered myself behind a large tree, and elevated the axe handle in the attitude of taking aim with a musket. Knowing the fatal effects of that instrument of death, my pursuers fled from its aim. Making the best of this momentary advantage, I quickly penetrated still deeper into the recesses of the woods, and eluded their pursuit.

I had now a little time to recover my breath ; and concealing myself beneath some felled trees, began to reflect upon my perilous situation, and devise means of escape. I well knew, if I came within reach of the war club I must feel its effects, if not instant death. This instrument is made of heavy wood, about four feet long, with a negro's head carved on one end as large as life. The butt of this club had tasted the blood of my brothers, and was now panting for vengeance on mine. I determined to remain in my retreat until night, and then endeavor to make my escape to the schooner. The hours, though few, passed like ages away, and visions of horror, and hope alternately clouded and lightened my heart. At length, under the shades of evening, I ventured to the beach in search of the vessel, bouyed up with the thought that I had eluded the grasp of

the foe, and should soon regain the schooner to relate the tale of those who had perished. But she had gone ! Despair at disappointment so unexpected unmanned me for a moment, and I inwardly prayed to Heaven for death. My feelings at this crisis, let the reader conceive. Cut off from all hope of relief, nothing to satisfy the cravings of nature but an appeal to the untamed savage, from whom no relief but death could be hoped, and that death one of extreme torture ! A momentary thought of self immolation flashed on my mind ; but reason returned, forcing upon me the recollection that the Almighty had *set his canons against self murder* ; and the *fear of something after death* made me relent ; and I finally resolved, come weal or wo, to surrender myself up to the natives.

Thus determined, I bent my steps towards them, with wo in my heart and death in my thoughts. As I approached, I found a large party assembled, and preparations made for a supper. Advancing close enough to observe every motion ; my blood curdled as I looked upon the horrid spectacle, and beheld my murdered friends roasting for the feast ! I remained in the neighborhood two or three hours, rivetted, as it were, to the spot. My heart bled for the poor fellows ; for, though accustomed to the storms and dangers of the ocean, its sensibilities were too delicate to contemplate, unmoved, a scene like this. The revolting thought that a similar fate awaited myself when in their power, changed my previous resolves, and turned my footsteps again to the woods. I summoned all my firmness, and deliberately made up my mind to starve in my hiding place rather than suffer the torture while living to be devoured by cannibals when dead.

The dread of suffering what I had seen, kept me in my retreat four days and nights, when the

calls of hunger forced me out in search of food. After some time I procured three young cocoa nuts, containing little else but water and shell and subsisted upon these and the refreshing showers of Heaven until the fifteenth day after the massacre. The weather upon these islands is continually changing, like the April season of our own country ; alternate sunshine and showers. My hiding place, though it sheltered me from the first, exposed me to the latter, and I was, during this time, literally dripping wet. On the morning of the fifteenth day, after cautiously looking to ascertain the safety of the measure, I stretched myself in the sun to dry. This, indeed, was a luxury to me, but, alas ! how brief. I had not been there long before an Indian came upon me, recognized me, fled and gave an alarm. I followed him to the beach, intending to give myself up and supplicate for mercy. On the beach I met a party of the natives, who had collected at the shout of my discoverer. I fell down on my knees before them, and with tears of anguish streaming from my eyes, entreated them to spare my life. The chief of the party approached, and the others seeing that I made no resistance, dropped their bows. I did think, for a moment, that mercy was not entirely unknown among them ; but the precious thought had hardly passed, when one of the stoutest chieftains gave me a blow on the back of the head with a war club, and I knew no more ! * * * *

In the afternoon, six or seven hours, as near as I could judge, after the wound was inflicted, my scattered senses began to return. I raised my hand to the back of my head, and found my skull was broken to the extent of two or three inches each way. I was faint from loss of blood—disconnected images floated before my imagination—and the most exquisite pains darted through all my limbs. Turning and raising myself a little, I

uttered an imprecation upon the barbarians, and prayed to God for deliverance in death ; and as my sight returned, my vacant eye rested upon a chieftain before unobserved. On my knees, with uplifted hands, I implored his friendship, and begged him to intercede for mercy in my behalf. I gave him to understand, as well as I could, that I would live with him and serve him as a slave forever if he would save me from the vengeance of his clan. He gave some slight signs of assent, and bade me follow him. Rousing all my energies, I stood upon my feet once more and obeyed. After I had been at his house a short time, he filled my wound with warm water, and compelled me to keep my head in a position to prevent its running out, until it had cooled, when the same operation was repeated ; and after this was poured out, the wound was filled with sand, and I was placed in a hut by myself, and mercifully suffered to remain undisturbed until the next morning.

At early dawn I was called up, stripped of all my apparel, and set to work. All the iron and tools plundered from the work shop were produced, and I commenced the manufacture of knives.--- Being better acquainted with the duties of a son of Neptune than of Vulcan, my progress was slow, and my productions not remarkably well finished ; but I did the best I could. I followed this occupation five or six days, and was delighted even in such a relief from their barbarities ; so much so, indeed, that I almost forgot my wound, to which no applications had been administered but those I have mentioned. The younger natives, however, gave me a call occasionally, to pass away the time in tormenting me with their gibes and jeers, and irritating and worrying my patience in every imaginable way. But, fiendlike as appeared these amusing freaks of the younger savages, they were indeed of service to me, inas-

much as they served to strengthen my nerves and enable me to resist with greater firmness the additional torments which were in store for me.— High as my expectations were raised by the railery of these *keen* though unlettered wits, I seldom suffered on the score of disappointment.— For different, indeed, were the sufferings I really endured.

When I had got through the manufacture of the knives, as if determined to have none of my time misspent, arrangements were made for me to visit the Principal Chief of the whole groupe of islands. His residence was at an island about five miles distant, and I was compelled to perform the pilgrimage, bare-footed, over coral rocks and shells, and my whole body completely exposed to the scorching rays of the sun. It is in vain for me to attempt to give even a faint idea of the anguish I suffered upon that burning day.

Every step I made left the imprint of my foot in blood upon the rocks and shells, and I seldom made a step upon that cruel strand that did not open a new channel for the purple current to flow from my lacerated feet. How I survived that awful day I cannot tell. Amidst the dreadful terrors with which it visited me, I gave up all my thoughts to God, and cried aloud, "*Oh why hast thou forsaken me !*" But he had not forsaken me ; *for he loveth whom he chasteneth*, and I was, with almost super-human strength enabled to bear up through my sufferings, and at the latter part of the journey my feelings had become so calloused, that I had forgotten all sense of pain, and the whole of my thoughts had flowed into one current—and that current directing my soul in its purest fervency of prayer to Heaven. The king came out and met us on the beach, and I was made to humble myself before him and kiss his hands and feet. After some other trifling ceremonies,

which I pass over, those who had me in custody, received certain orders, and were then directed to take me back the same night. A chill of horror ran through my veins, and cold drops of sweat started like electricity upon my fevered flesh, as the import of this order was manifested to my bewildered senses. Now I prayed to God for death—*any death*—to save me from the shocking pain of retracing that rugged path I had trodden, and which was marked at every step, from one end to the other, with clotted blood from my feet; and my feet themselves were so wofully butchered that I had given up all hopes of using them again, forever! With feelings like these to combat, it required a stouter heart than mine to resist despair, and I involuntarily surrendered myself up to that unhappy influence. Thus I remained until evening came; when the savages seeing the utter impossibility of my returning any other way, graciously took me back in a canoe!

The next day my poor body presented a spectacle too appalling for the contemplation of any human heart or eye not used to dwell unmoved on scenes of the severest suffering—of the most heart-rending distress. I was covered from head to foot with smarting blisters, the effect of exposure to the sun in my dreadful journey of yesterday.

In addition to all this, and as if my cup of woes were not full to overflowing, the younger *devils*—if I may be excused for calling them so—commenced an attack upon my beard and whiskers, pulling out the latter in large bunches; nor would they desist from their hellish sport, until I had, in the extreme agony of my soul, implored of them,—in cries of such searching misery as to reach even a cannibal's heart,—the humble privilege of being suffered to perform that exquisite act of torture myself. And at length, it was decreed, that mercy so far should be shown me. I wore,

at the time I was taken, a very large pair of whiskers,—long, full, and bushy,—and my beard had grown to a great length, as I had not shaved since I left the vessel. Every hair of both these I coolly sat down to extract with my own hands and a pair of pearl shells, used as tweezers, rather than submit to the outrageous method in which my unhallowed persecutors had sought to divest me of them. Every twitch with the tweezers drew tears from my eyes, and when the reader recollects the situation I was in, he will readily imagine that the blood flowed freely as I followed the operation. Every pull sent a thrill through my frame like the application of a shower of needles ; and while my eyes were streaming with tears, thus cruelly wrung from them, my cheeks, and chin, and lips, were clotted with blood. This torture, which I was compelled to inflict upon myself, or suffer it to be more harshly performed by others, occupied four days. This single act of itself, independent of all my other sufferings, was sufficient to make me curse the hour in which I was born ; and as I sat there in my misery, the most pitiable object upon which the sun ever shone, I wept in deepest grief my forlorn condition, as I prayed again and again to a merciful God to take me from such monsters to himself.

But while all this accumulation of monstrosities was heaping upon me, another, not less barbarous, rendered their effect still more severe. This was *hunger* ! I lived only upon the gills, and fins, and bones of fish, after they had passed the table of *Hennean*, the chief whose slave I was ; and my allowance of these being insufficient for subsistence, I had pined away to a mere skeleton.—Ascertaining that the rats upon the island were feasted and fattened upon the very offals which were denied to me, for the especial benefit of the chieftains, I set to work devising a plan to entrap

some of these stall fed luxuries. I had been given to understand it as a high crime to kill one of them, nevertheless my fortunes were desperate, and I had no hesitation in risking my life one way to save it in another. In the darkness of night, I entrapped many a fat fellow, and feasted upon him in the silence of my seclusion with more true joy, and a sweeter relish, than the proudest monarch ever knew, surrounded by all the pomp and circumstance of royalty, when banquetting upon the choicest viands of the world. The rats alone saved me from death by starvation; and as an expression of my gratitude, I freely confess that I have revolted from that portion of the human family who have declared a war of extermination against their degraded race. I testify to the virtues of the species—I have tasted it.

During my captivity, and amidst all my distresses, I was subjected to perform the offices of the most degraded slave. I was a mere "hewer of wood and drawer of water" to the meanest of their clan, and a standing mark for the ridicule and ribaldry of all around me. And it was under these circumstances that I employed every hour of leisure could steal in cleansing my sorry wound of the sand with which it had been filled. Sometime after it began to heal a piece of the skull bone came out about two inches in length, and a quarter of an inch in breadth. I took out the sand gradually with my hands, and held my head in a position to catch water in the wound as it rained, to aid me in cleansing it. In this way I got rid of it all in about three weeks, with the exception of a stone about the size of a buck shot, which had forced its way down into the hollow of my neck. This caused me much pain and irritation, and took me, off and on, all of two days to get out. In these operations I had no instruments to assist me; my fingers alone did the

work, and to these the sense of feeling was of course the only guide.

In this way I "lived and moved and had my being" until about a week before the Antarctic returned; a day on which it had been promulgated that I should be killed and roasted for a feast, at sunrise. At daylight I was called forth for the sacrifice, and taken to that fatal part of the island, on the north side, which had already been moistened by the blood of my friends, over whose roasted carcasses the inhuman monsters had rent the air with their of shouts fiendish mirth. All the dread labors of preparation were upon my shoulders—the wood for the fire—the water, fruits, &c. necessary to complete the feast, were brought by my hands; and all the minute and degrading arrangements for the immolation were made by the victim himself. These being completed, the axe—that very instrument at which their coward hearts quailed in the woods—was pointed out to me, and I ordered to set down by the side of it and assured that that was to wind up my career as soon as the Chief King arrived. As I was prepared for my fate, I received this annunciation with calmness and fortitude, and awaited the happy moment of death with impatience. In this condition of things, before the appointed hour of sacrifice, I gave myself up to reflection. Memory for a short time, was busy with the past, the present, and the future. The vast ocean was passed; and, like a ray of light, I was wafted to the joyous little groupe upon the school house steps of my far off home. Recollection ran through the scenes of earlier life, and brought up afresh the innocent gambols of childhood and youth, when arrayed in smiles of contentment and peace. I looked on this picture of beauty with delight, but as I gazed, it faded away, and memory came back to my desolate state, as a shout from the chieftains restored my senses to the business before us.

It was noon, and a messenger brought information that the King was not pleased to attend on that day, and that I, for the present, must be discharged, and sent home.

I cannot say but I was disappointed once in regard to their cruelties, but I do say, I thought the disappointment more cruel than the reality could possibly have been, as the latter would have ended all my woes ; whereas, if I lived, I knew I must be subject to their continuance. And it was so. I lived in continual torment from that time up to the very hour the vessel arrived.

After an absence of one hundred and eight days, the Antarctic hove in sight on the 13th of September. The natives first discovered her as she peered in beauty beyond the coral reef, and flew to my kut with the news. This I apprehended would be the signal for my death, and I endeavored to convince them that the vessel in sight was not the one to which I belonged ; but they were hardly to be convinced that it was possible for another vessel to have discovered them in so short a time. I drew two figures in the sand, one of which I represented as the Antarctic, bound on her course from the Island, and the other as the one now coming in, and of which I had no knowledge ; but my labor was in vain, for they persisted in their belief, and would not be convinced to the contrary.

The schooner did not come in that night but anchored off at a distance. While she lay there the emotions that came and went over my heart, were both pleasant and painful. It was delightful, after all I had undergone, to feel my hopes of release brightened up even by the precarious chance of escape which the arrival of the schooner presented ; but the utter impossibility of carrying such a measure into execution, clouded over the prospect, and I settled myself down again in sadness and grief. Thus I passed the

night, in fitful dreams of hope and despair—changing with such rapidity, that it was a matter of doubt to me which left the deepest impression.

The next morning, all was bustle and preparation—canoes came swarming from all the Islands of the groupe, crowded with warriors—the din of war, with its uproar and confusion, reigned around—and, happily, my poor self was entirely neglected and forgotten. Five or six hundred warriors, in canoes, on the reef, &c., commenced a furious attack upon the schooner, as if they intended to demolish her at a single blow; but the well-directed efforts of Captain Morrell soon repulsed them, and they returned in disorder and raving like lions. The Captain,—how fortunate for me!—commenced a regular cannonade upon the Island; which, destroying their houses and lives indiscriminately, excited great consternation among them, and led to the measure of sending me to sue for a parley. This having been decided upon, I was brought forth, and desired by the Queen to go off and stop the “*booing*,” as she termed the thunder of the cannon. Fearing a shower of arrows would be sent after me, I hesitated and expressed my fears as plainly as possible, and *Hennean*, my master, was sent for, and desired to send me on board. He did not like to trust me out of his reach, but I gave him to understand that I would go on board and stop the “*booing*,” and come immediately back. And in order to assist his patriotism in sending me away to save his country from destruction, I made him believe I would on no account undertake the mission unless he would consent to my returning to live with him the rest of my life. This bait took admirably, and he assured me that if I returned I should be forever safe from harm and the object of his especial care. I now began to feel my consequence a little. I stood between my friends and enemies, in a most conspicuous

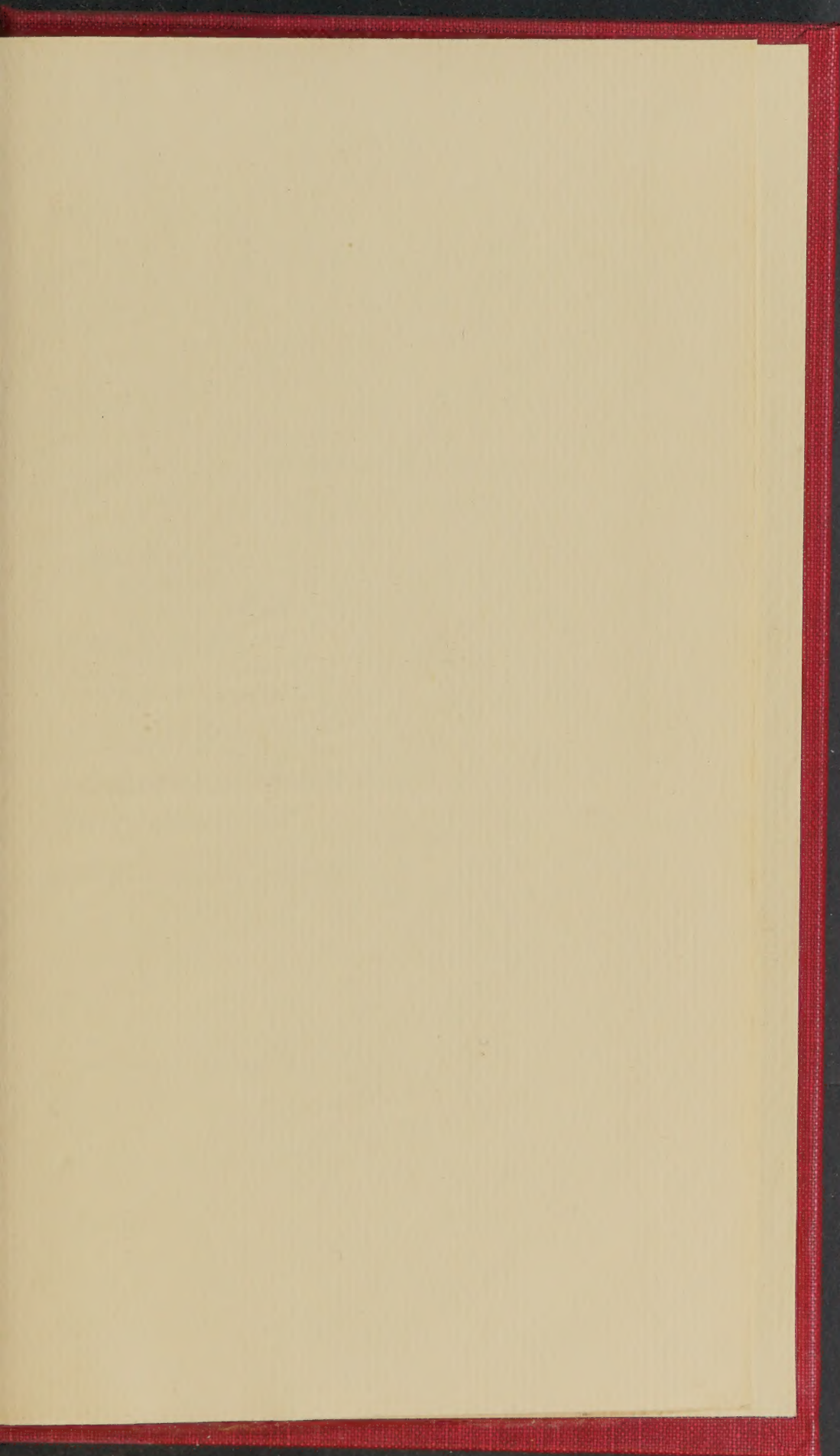
light. To my charge was committed the diplomatic functions of a powerful nation, and I started off to accomplish the object of my mission.—Conceiving myself as yet hardly secure from their treachery, after paddling about two hundred yards, I returned and made my master repeat all his promises and professions, and then embarked in good earnest, with the longest and strongest pulls I could make for the schooner. When I got beyond the reach of the savages, some imperceptible power seemed to give new strength to my arms and a mighty impulse to my frail bark—the little oar felt like a feather in my grasp, and the canoe “walked the water like a thing of life.”

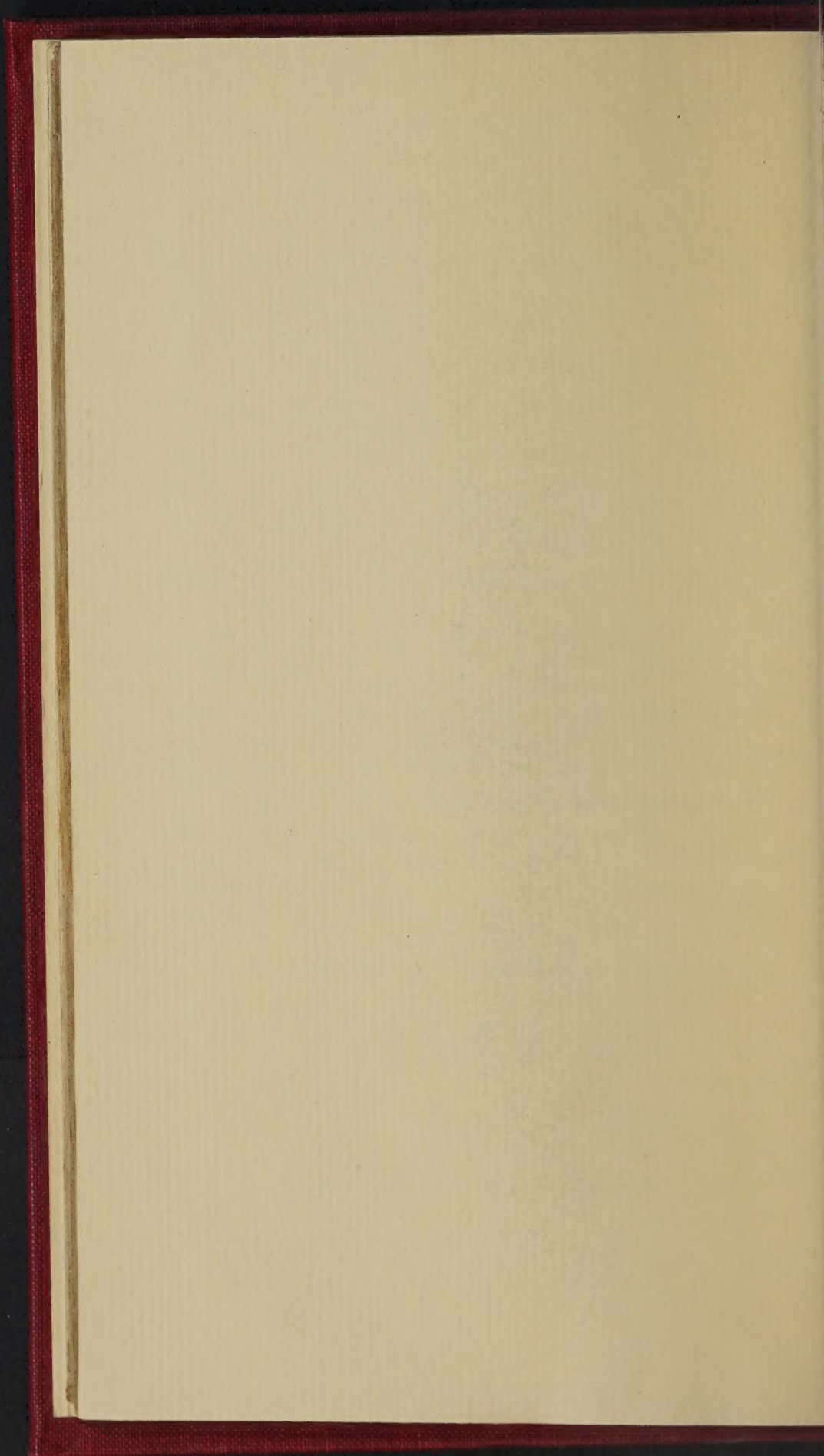
Captain Morrell immediately ceased firing as the canoe came off from the shore, and I made directly for the vessel. My form was emaciated and wasted to such a degree, and so defaced with paint of various colors, and my face so completely changed, from the loss of my huge whiskers, that no one on board the schooner could possibly recognise me without hearing my voice. When I had arrived within speaking distance, the Captain hailed, “Who’s there?” “Old Shaw come back again!” was my reply, as I looked on the goal I pursued with a heart full of joy to the brim. I soon came alongside, where I received a suit of clothes, put them on, and mounted once more the bright deck of the Antarctic.

And what a scene was here!—the captain and his good lady, clung round my neck and wept for joy; and all the crew received me with a welcome so generous, so cordial, and affectionate, that all my woes were for the time forgotten,—and the scene, the occasion, and the bliss, are so engraven upon my memory, that they can only be effaced when the last spark of life is extinct.

The whole of these Islands are under the absolute sway of a single chief. Each of the separate islands has a subordinate chief, with many others dependent on him. I could discover amongst them no trace of religion—no appearance of any thing like a reverence for a superior power. The chiefs indulge in polygamy, but the generality of the men have but one wife. The women are reserved and chaste, their husbands killing them without any scruples on the least suspicion of infidelity. As I saw no children during my captivity, it is my impression they kill them all except those of the chiefs. Their huts are simple, and constructed of bamboo, and covered with cocoanut leaves.

These Islands afford a field of vast importance to individuals and to our country. The soil is rich, and capable of producing, under cultivation, all the wealth of a tropical clime. The sugar cane, coffee, cotton, &c., may all flourish and be made to yield their increase with trifling labor, and that labor, under proper regulations, procured for a song. These islands open a field of speculation, indeed, on many accounts, well worthy the attention of the government, and the enterprising spirit of our countrymen.





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